

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-07 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10

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AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

INFO USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

USINT CAIRO

USINT DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

USCINCEUR

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

DIA

USINT BAGHDAD

S E C R E T BEIRUT 5817

LIMDIS

JERUSALEM FOR SECRETARY'S PARTY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS MOPS XF LE IS

SUBJECT: LEBANON, FEDAYEEN AND ISRAEL

REF: TEL AVIV 2798

1. WE RECOGNIZE THAT GOI HAS DIFFERENT VIEW OF

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MILITARY RESULTS OF IDF ATTACKS ON TARGETS IN LEBANON,

INCLUDING EFFECT ON RELATIONS BETWEEN LEBANESE CIVILIAN POPULATION AND FEDAYEEN. THIS SHOULD BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN ANY TALKS WITH GOI.

2. IAF BOMBING RAIDS DO OCCASIONALLY PRODUCE FEDAYEEN CASUALTIES, ESPECIALLY WHEN THEY TAKE FEDAYEEN BASE CAMPS BY SURPRISE. THIS WAS CASE WITH SOME OF EARLIER RAIDS IN ARKUB AREA. HOWEVER, LOSS OF SEVERAL SCORE FEDAYEEN IS NOT SUCH A DETERRENT TO THEIR ACTIVITIES AS TO COM-PENSTATE, IN OUR JUDGMENT, FOR INCREASED INCENTIVE TO ATTACK ISRAEL (I.E., ANGER, DESIRE FOR REVENGE) WHICH RAIDS STIMULATE IN PALESTINIANS GENERALLY AND FEDAYEEN IN PARTICULAR. FEAR OF ISRAELI ATTACKS MAY POSTPONE BRIEFLY FEDAYEEN MOVES BUT LITTLE MORE. CERTAINLY DESTRUCTION OF BUILDINGS, SUCH AS PDFLP HEADQUARTERS HIT NEAR AIN EL HELWE CAMP (BEIRUT 5599) MEANINGLESS IN PURELY MILITARY SENSE SINCE FEDAYEEN LEADERS ARE ALMOST NEVER IN OR NEAR SUCH BUILDINGS DURING TENSE PERIOD, AND THEY HAVE NO TROUBLE FINDING OTHER BUILDINGS TO REPLACE THOSE DESTROYED. FEDAYEEN TRAVEL LIGHT AND DO NOT NEED MUCH IN WAY OF LOGISTIC SUPPORT.

3. IN BORDER AREAS THERE HAS BEEN STEADY EXODUS OF LEBANESE POPULATION GOING BACK SEVERAL MONTHS. POPULACE IN BORDER AREA, ESPECIALLY DRUZE LIVING IN ARKUB BUT ALSO SHIAS AND CHRISTIANS LIVING ALONG SOUTHERN BORDER, OBJECTS TO FEDAYEEN PRESENCE IN OR VERY NEAR VILLAGES. IN SOME DRUZE VILLAGES IN ARKUB FEDAYEEN HAVE MOVED AWAY FROM VILLAGES AND SET UP CAMPS IN CAVES AND TENTS IN RUGGED COUNTRYSIDE. MAIN OBJECTION OF DRUZE RELIGIOUS LEADER CITED IN REFTTEL IS THAT DESPITE THIS IAF HIT SACRED SPOT ON 21 MAY, KILLING THREE CHILDREN AND WOUNDING SEVERAL OTHER PERSONS. DRUZE LIKELY REDOUBLE PRESSURE TO KEEP FEDAYEEN OUT OF VILLAGES, BUT THIS WILL NOT KEEP THEM FROM APPROACHING BORDER IN UNINHABITED AREAS. NON-DRUZE VILLAGERS HAVE BEEN LEAVING RATHER THAN DEFEND THEIR HOMES AND RISK BEING SHELLED OR BOMBED. COMPLAINTS OF BORDER POPULATION ARE NOT, HOWEVER, STRONG ENOUGH TO FORCE GOL AND LEBANESE ARMY INTO ANOTHER ARMED CONFRONTATION WITH FEDAYEEN. LEBANESE POPULATION AS
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WHOLE, AND EVEN SHOUTHERN DEPUTIES, HAVE ADOPTED ATTITUDE THAT THEY ARE CAUGHT IN SOMETHING SO MUCH BIGGER AND STRONGER THAN LEBANON THAT BEST WAY OUT IS TO TRY AND MINIMIZE DAMAGE, GRIT TEETH, CRITICIZE GOL AND GOI, AND RIDE OUT STORM.

4. GOL AND LEBANESE ARMY WOULD LIKE TO DO MORE BUT LACK POLITICALL AND MILITARY CAPABILITY UNDER PRESENT CIRCUM-

STANCES. AS REPORTED PARA 6 BEIRUT 5740, GOL IS EXPLORING
WITH KEY ARAB GOVTS FROM WHICH IT MIGHT FIND SUPPORT WHAT
MORE MIGHT BE DONE UNDER NEW SITUATION WHICH WOULD BE CREATED
BY DISENGAGEMENT BETWEEN SYRIA AND ISRAEL. WE ARE ENCOURAGING
THEM ACT ALONG THESE LINES. SYRIA REMAINS KEY TO ANSWERING
QUESTION OF WHAT MORE GOL CAN DO, JUST AS ITS POSITION WAS CRUCIAL
TO OUTCOME OF GOL-FEDAYEEN CONFRONTATION OF MAY 1973.
GODLEY

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